

1958

Year

107  
Chapter

The New York State Library  
Legislative Reference Library  
Albany, N. Y.

---

Bill Jacket Collection

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY

MICROFILMED

Date 8/12/59

No. of printed bills 2

No. of exposures

exclusive of bills 18

Form No. 88--2000

# State of New York

In Assembly

FEB 1 0

1958

Ordered, That the Clerk deliver the bill entitled

## AN ACT

To amend the penal law, in relation to the sale or possession  
of gravity knives

to the Senate, and request its concurrence in the same.

By order of the Assembly

ANSLEY B. BORKOWSKI

Clerk

1

IN SENATE  
Passed Without Amendment

FEB 24 1958

By order of the SENATE

*William S. Key*  
SECRETARY



STANLEY STEINGUT  
271 MADISON AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

RECEIVED

FEB 27 REC'D

COUNSEL TO THE GOVERNOR

February 26, 1958

Hon. Daniel Gutman  
Counsel to the Governor  
Executive Chamber  
Albany, N. Y.

Dear Dan:

My bill Assembly Introductory 913,  
Print 1796, simply includes gravity knives  
in Section 1896 which makes any person who  
sells or has in his possession certain  
dangerous weapons guilty of a misdemeanor.

The gravity knife has come into  
being as a circumvention of this section and  
is the successor of the switchblade knife.  
The gravity knife is not violative of this  
section and, therefore, it is imperative that  
it be included.

Sincerely yours,

*Stanley*  
STANLEY STEINGUT  
Member of Assembly

SS:ak

FRANCIS S. MCGARVEY  
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF NEW YORK



GEORGE M. SEARLE  
DEPUTY  
CHIEF INSPECTOR  
MARTIN F. DILLON  
CHIEF INSPECTOR

NEW YORK STATE TROOPERS  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
DIVISION OF STATE POLICE  
ALBANY

*A-713* February 26, 1958.

Hon. Daniel Gutman,  
Counsel to the Governor,  
Executive Chamber,  
Albany, N.Y.

Dear Judge Gutman:

This acknowledges your memorandum, enclosing Assembly Bill Print No. 913-1796 Int. 913, an act to amend the penal law, in relation to the sale or possession of gravity knives.

The proposed legislation deals with a technicality concerning a type of dangerous weapon and clarifies and reinforces existing law. The Division recommends approval.

Very truly yours,

*Francis S. McGarvey*

Francis S. McGarvey  
Superintendent.

FSMcG/m.

RECEIVED

RECEIVED

RECEIVED

RECEIVED

FEB 26 3 11 PM

RECEIVED

RECEIVED



THOMAS J. MCHUGH  
COMMISSIONER  
WILLIAM E. FLANIGAN  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION  
ALFRED E. SMITH STATE OFFICE BUILDING  
ALBANY

WILLIAM E. LEONARD  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER  
CHARLES S. ANTOLINA  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER  
SOLOMON KAUFMAN  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

February 27, 1958

Re: An act to amend the penal law, in relation  
to the sale or possession of gravity knives

Assembly Int. 913 - Pr. 913, 1796  
Assemblyman Steingut - Introducer

A 913

Hon. Daniel Gutman  
Counsel to the Governor  
Executive Chamber  
Albany, New York

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to your request for comment, please be  
advised that this Department has no objection to the  
approval of the above bill.

Very truly yours,

*S. Kaufman*

Solomon Kaufman  
Deputy Commissioner

sk:hgj

**CLASS OF SERVICE**  
This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

# WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

1201

**SYMBOLS**  
DL = Day Letter  
NL = Night Letter  
LT = International Letter Telegram

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

SYD138

SY NNB753 NL PD=NEWYORK NY 27=

GOVERNOR W A HARRIMAN=

1958 SEP 27 PM 8 18

ALBANY NY=

ADVISED BILL REGARDING GRAVITY KNIVES PASSED SENATE  
ASSEMBLY NOW AWAITING YOUR SIGNATURE OUR ASSOCIATION  
URGES YOU SIGN=

QUEENS COUNTY GRAND JURORS ASSOCIATION INC  
CLEMENS GRAFE=

7

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE



March 4, 1958

My dear Mr. Grafe:

On behalf of Governor Harriman, I  
acknowledge receipt of your recent communication  
regarding the legislation concerning gravity  
knives.

The Governor has asked me to thank  
you for advising him as to your views in the  
matter.

Cordially yours,

DG:efbb

Mr. Clemens Grafe, Queens County Grand Jurors Assoc.  
Queens Medical Society Building  
112-25 Queens Boulevard  
Forest Hills 75, New York

# Queens County Grand Jurors' Association, Inc.

## NEW YORK

### President

HERMAN C. HANSEN  
166-33 89th Avenue  
Jamaica 32, N. Y.  
REpublic 9-3243

### Vice-Presidents

EMIL J. HORN  
HERMAN WEBER  
VINCENT J. ASHTON

### Counsel

FRANK M. NICOLosi



Organized 1925

Place of Meeting  
QUEENS MEDICAL SOCIETY BUILDING  
112-25 Queens Boulevard  
Forest Hills 75, N. Y.

ROBERT ELLIOTT, JR., Treasurer  
72-16 67th Place, Glendale 27, N. Y.  
Tel. HEgeman 3-8393

STEPHEN F. SCHNEIDER, Secretary  
53-29 62nd Street  
Maspeth 78, N. Y.  
Tel. HAvenmeyer 9-4003

### Legislation Committee

Clemens Grafe, Chairman  
86-29 78 Street, Woodhaven 21, N. Y.

### Board of Governors

- \*WILLIAM A. BANGERT
- FLOYD V. BOICE
- \*ALFRED A. BUDDENHAGEN
- \*LEONARD S. COLYER
- JAMES J. CREEGAN
- JOHN M. CULKIN
- FLOYD R. DAVIS
- \*ANTHONY F. DeSETA
- \*M. EUGENE FLIPSE
- \*JOHN L. FRANK
- CLEMENS GRAFE
- LAWRENCE J. HAMMEL
- \*HENDRICK E. HENDRICKSON
- HERMAN P. HERZFELDER
- HENRY L. HOLLRIEGEL
- HARRY C. HUBER
- \*ROBERT H. HUEBNER
- \*JOHN L. KLAGES
- JOSEPH MAIER
- \*THOMAS F. MALONE
- ALBERT A. MILLER
- ANTHONY J. MOLESPHINI
- HENRY J. MUFF
- \*ALBERT J. NIENSTEDT
- EDWARD M. PARTRIDGE
- \*JOHN F. RAPP
- WILLIAM J. RIGNEY
- FREDERICK H. ROMMEL
- FRED H. ROTHSTEIN
- \*DANIEL RUSSO
- \*MARTIN L. SAVARESE
- CHARLES SCALA
- \*CHARLES H. SCHROEDER
- \*FRANCIS J. SORG
- \*THOMAS J. STYLES
- \*EMIL C. ZIMMERMANN

February 28, 1958

Governor Averell Harriman  
State Capitol Building  
Albany, New York

Honorable Sir:

I am confirming on behalf of our Association the following telegram sent to you on yesterday's date.

"Advised bill regarding Gravity Knives passed Senate Assembly. Now awaiting your signature. Our Association urges you sign."

Due to the teenage problem at present prevalent in New York City the passage of the bill in our opinion will improve conditions in our City by its enforcement.

Your co-operation is enlisted in this matter and our Association would appreciate receiving your comments at your earliest convenience.

Anticipating your favorable reply.

Sincerely yours,

Clemens Grafe

NOV 14 2011 4:11 PM

March 6, 1958

My dear Mr. Grafe:

On behalf of Governor Harriman, I acknowledge your letter of February 28, 1958 concerning legislation outlawing the use of gravity knives.

You will be pleased to know that Governor Harriman approved this bill yesterday and it is now part of the laws of our state.

Cordially yours,

Mr. Clemens Grafe  
Queens County Grand Jurors' Association, Inc.  
86-29 78th Street  
Woodhaven 21, New York

EG:WJ:ms

# COMMITTEE TO BAN TEEN-AGE WEAPONS

STATE SEN. FRANK J. PINO  
Vice Chairman

HON. JOHN E. CONE  
Chairman

CITY COUNCILMAN JACK KRANIS  
Vice Chairman

IN COOPERATION WITH  
THE YOUTH SERVICE LEAGUE  
HON. ALBERT M. LEAVITT, President

## ADVISORY BOARD:

VICTOR L. ANFUSO  
Member of Congress  
PETER C. BROWN  
Corporation Counsel, New York City  
ALBERT W. BYRNES  
VINCENT J. CARISTO  
JOHN CASHMORE  
Borough President, Brooklyn  
VERY REV. MSGR. WILLIAM M. CASEY  
Director, St. Vincent's Home for Boys  
ARTHUR CLINTON  
Dir. Bureau of Attendance,  
Board of Education  
JOHN E. CONE  
Justice, N.Y.S. Supreme Court  
JOHN V. CONNORTON  
Executive Director,  
Greater New York Hospital Ass'n  
IRVING BEN COOPER  
Chief Judge, Court of Spec. Sessions  
JAMES CRISONA  
Borough President, Queens  
ANTHONY J. DI GIOVANNA  
Justice, Supreme Court, Kings County  
HON. JONAH GOLDSTEIN  
ROSS DI LORENZO  
Counsel, Workman's Compensation  
REV. ROBERT GALLAGHER  
Director, Youth Counseling Service,  
Archdiocese of N. Y.  
LOUIS GOLDSTEIN  
Retired Justice, Kings County Court  
GEORGE H. HEARN  
City Councilman  
ALEXANDER G. HESTERBERG  
Tax Commissioner  
HULAN E. JACK  
Borough President, Manhattan  
NATHANIEL KAPLAN  
Justice, Court of Domestic Relations  
EDNA F. KELLY  
Member of Congress  
STEPHEN P. KENNEDY  
Police Comm., City of New York  
JACK KRANIS  
City Councilman  
ALBERT M. LEAVITT  
Chief Clerk,  
Surrogate's Court, Kings County  
EMILIO NUNEZ  
Justice, City Court  
FRANK D. O'CONNOR  
District Attorney, Queens County  
FRANK J. PINO  
State Senator  
REV. DANIEL M. POTTER  
Protestant Council  
REV. VINCENT J. POWELL  
CYO Brooklyn Diocese  
DR. EDWARD D. RE  
Professor, St. Johns Law School  
ARTHUR J. ROGERS  
Director of Community Relations,  
New York City Youth Board  
JOHN J. RYAN  
Assemblyman  
ARTHUR M. SCHREIER  
JOSEPH T. SHARKEY  
Majority Leader,  
New York City Council  
EDWARD S. SILVER  
District Attorney, Kings County  
RABBI RALPH SILVERSTEIN  
Temple Sinai  
ABE STARK  
President, New York City Council  
STANLEY STEINGUT  
Assemblyman  
EDWARD THOMPSON  
Justice, Court of Special Sessions  
RALPH WHELAN  
Executive Director,  
New York City Youth Board  
JOSEPH ZARETZKI  
Minority Leader, State Senate  
WOMEN'S DIVISION  
RITA DEVELIN  
MAXINE DUBERSTEIN  
SYLVIA EPSTEIN  
LEE SINGER  
ROSE SINGER

## The Committee seeks to:

- Outlaw the "gravity knife."
- Limit the sale of bullets in New York City.
- Establish a temporary Commission to help modernize the Sullivan Law.
- Ban the importation and shipment in interstate commerce of switchblade and gravity knives.

March 6, 1958

Dear Governor Hariman,

You will note on the petitions submitted to you by Judge Cone in support of the bill to outlaw the "gravity knife" the message to return to me on thousands of signatures (see enclosed sample) I call this to your attention so you will consider the strength the Starchus of NYC might have if aroused to use it

They are really a dedicated group with a sincere interest in our youth. I should like to be able to tell them that you helped us. Please give enclosed appeal your careful consideration. Respectfully yours

# COMMITTEE TO BAN TEEN-AGE WEAPONS

714 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

Circle 5-2570-1

HON. JOHN E. CONE  
Chairman

STATE SENATOR FRANK J. PINO  
Vice Chairman

GEORGE SAPAN  
Treasurer

CITY COUNCILMAN JACK KRANIS  
Vice Chairman

MRS. NATHANIEL SINGER  
Chairman, Women's Division

IN COOPERATION WITH  
THE YOUTH SERVICE LEAGUE

HON. ALBERT M. LEAVITT, President



## ADVISORY BOARD

VICTOR L. ANFUSO  
Member of Congress

SAMUEL J. BATTLE  
Former Parole Commissioner

PETER C. BROWN  
Corporation Counsel, New York City

ALBERT W. BYRNES

VINCENT J. CARISTO

VERY REV. MSGR. WILLIAM M. CASEY  
Director, St. Vincent's Home for Boys

JOHN CASHMORE  
Borough President, Brooklyn

ALFRED J. CAWSE, JR.  
Justice, Court Special Sessions

ARTHUR CLINTON  
Dir. Bureau of Attendance,  
Board of Education

JOHN E. CONE  
Justice, N.Y.S. Supreme Court

JOHN V. CONNORTON  
Executive Director,  
Greater New York Hospital Ass'n

IRVING BEN COOPER  
Chief Judge, Court of Spec. Sessions

JAMES CRISONA  
Borough President, Queens

ANTHONY J. DI GIOVANNA  
Justice, Supreme Court, Kings County

ROSS DI LORENZO  
Counsel, Workman's Compensation

ROBERT W. DOWLING  
President, City Investing Co.

JOHN GALARDI

REV. ROBERT GALLAGHER  
Director, Youth Counseling Service  
Archdiocese of N. Y.

HON. JONAH GOLDSTEIN  
Retired Judge, Court General Sessions

LOUIS GOLDSTEIN  
Retired Justice, Kings County Court

GEORGE H. HEARN  
City Councilman

ALEXANDER G. HESTERBERG  
Tax Commissioner

MORRIS HORN  
Labor Representative

HULAN E. JACK  
Borough President, Manhattan

NATHANIEL KAPLAN  
Justice, Court of Domestic Relations

EDNA F. KELLY

STEPHEN P. KENNEDY  
Police Comm., City of New York

ABRAHAM KRADITOR  
Past Nat'l Comm. J.W.V.

JACK KRANIS  
City Councilman

ANNA M. KROSS  
Commissioner, Dept. of Corrections  
City of New York

ALBERT M. LEAVITT  
Chief Clerk,  
Surrogate's Court, Kings County

DR. JULIUS MARK  
Senior Rabbi, Temple Emanu-El

EMILIO NUNEZ  
Justice, City Court

FRANK D. O'CONNOR  
District Attorney, Queens County

FRANK J. PINO  
State Senator

(OVER)

We the undersigned urge the following  
legislative program to help ban ten-age  
weapons:

- Outlaw the "gravity knife."
- Limit the sale of bullets in New York City.
- Establish a temporary Commission to help modernize the Sullivan Law.
- Ban the importation and shipment in interstate commerce of switchblade and gravity knives.

## NAME

## ADDRESS

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO:  
RITA DEVELIN  
301 EAST 20TH STREET  
BROOKLYN 26, NEW YORK

13



STATE OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW  
ALBANY

LOUIS J. LEFKOWITZ  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEMORANDUM FOR THE GOVERNOR

Re: Assembly Int. 913, Pr. 1796

This bill amends the Penal Law, Section 1896, which makes it a misdemeanor for a person to manufacture, sell, loan, lease or give a switchblade to any other person. The amendment similarly condemns the sale, loan or lease of gravity knives which are defined therein to be knives containing blades automatically opened by the force of gravity. Section 1897, subdivision 3, relating to the possession, is amended to permit the carrying of gravity knives in certain circumstances.

There is no legal objection to this bill.

Dated March 3, 1958

Respectfully submitted,

*Louis J. Lefkowitz*  
LOUIS J. LEFKOWITZ  
Attorney General *B. J. [unclear]*



NYC 55-10M-120021(58) 114

## THE CITY OF NEW YORK



## REPORT ON STATE LEGISLATION—APPROVED

Use a separate form for each bill. If necessary, continue on a blank sheet showing introductory and print numbers and pertinent item numbers.

Submit in Duplicate to Legislative Representative as follows:

Original to Room 1100, De Witt Clinton Hotel, Albany, N. Y.

Duplicate to Office of the Mayor, City Hall, New York 7, N. Y.

To: THE MAYOR  
Att. The Legislative Representative

From: Reporting  
Agency: POLICE DEPARTMENT

## 1. IDENTIFYING DATA (as printed on face of bill)

SENATE INT. NO. PRINT NO. , INTRODUCER

ASSEMBLY INT. NO. 913 PRINT NO. 913, 1796 , INTRODUCER Steingut

TITLE OF THE BILL (Abbreviate if necessary) AN ACT to amend the penal law, in relation to the sale of possession of gravity knives.

2. ESTIMATED COST OR INCOME  
(Indicate sum total of estimated mandated expenses, revenue losses or income to City)

Expenses or Loss	Income

## 3. STATUS OF THE BILL (as printed above bill's title or rubber stamped on bill)

IN COMMITTEE ☐

ADVANCING ON CALENDAR ☐

BEFORE THE GOVERNOR ☒

## 4. EFFECT OF BILL AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

(a. Describe legal effect of the bill and outline reasons for your recommendations. b. Include detailed analysis of any estimate shown in Item 2. c. Cite introductory and print numbers of identical or similar bills of current and prior years reported on by your agency and its recommendations thereon.)

This proposal would amend Section 1896 and subdivision 3 of Section 1897 of the Penal Law. The bill defines as a misdemeanor the manufacture, sale or possession of a gravity knife and as a felony the possession of such a knife if previously convicted of any crime. The gravity knife is one which is released from the handle or sheath thereof by gravity or by the application of centrifugal force. When released, it is locked in place by means of a button, spring, lever or other device.

Under the present statutes covering dangerous and unlawful weapons, the switchblade knife is included therein while there is silence as to the gravity knife. There can be no doubt that the gravity knife is as much a hazard to the safety of the general public as the switchblade knife. Since it has been made unlawful to have and possess a switchblade knife, the gravity knife has been most attractive and useful to those engaged in criminal activity. The experience of this Department indicates that gravity knives are being used increasingly as weapons in the perpetration of such crimes as homicides, assault, rape and robbery. Naturally, since it is not unlawful to possess such a knife under present law, the person about to commit such heinous crimes has no fear of being apprehended with such knife in his possession. As a result, one of the deterrent factors in the prevention of serious crimes is lost.



NYC 55-10M-120021(58) 114

## THE CITY OF NEW YORK

## REPORT ON STATE LEGISLATION—APPROVED



Use a **separate** form for **each** bill. If necessary, continue on a blank sheet showing introductory and print numbers and pertinent item numbers.

Submit in **Duplicate** to **Legislative Representative** as follows:

Original to Room 1100, De Witt Clinton Hotel, Albany, N. Y.

Duplicate to Office of the Mayor, City Hall, New York 7, N. Y.

To: **THE MAYOR**  
Att. **The Legislative Representative**

From: Reporting  
Agency **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

## 1. IDENTIFYING DATA (as printed on face of bill)

SENATE INT. NO. PRINT NO. , INTRODUCER

ASSEMBLY INT. NO. **913** PRINT NO. **913, 1796**, INTRODUCER **Steingut**

TITLE OF THE BILL (Abbreviate if necessary)

2. ESTIMATED COST OR INCOME  
(Indicate sum total of estimated mandated expenses, revenue losses or income to City)

Expenses or Loss	Income

## 3. STATUS OF THE BILL (as printed above bill's title or rubber stamped on bill)

IN COMMITTEE ☐

ADVANCING ON CALENDAR ☐

BEFORE THE GOVERNOR ☒

## 4. EFFECT OF BILL AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

(a. Describe legal effect of the bill and outline reasons for your recommendations. b. Include detailed analysis of any estimate shown in Item 2. c. Cite introductory and print numbers of identical or similar bills of current and prior years reported on by your agency and its recommendations thereon.)

- 2 -

The gravity knife is inherently dangerous. To children and adults not versed in the use of such weapons, this knife can cause very serious injuries.

For the above reasons, this Department strongly urges the enactment of this proposal.

16

POLICE COMMISSIONER

March 3, 1958

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICER

TITLE

DATE

CAPITAL DOCUMENTS

5184491332

38/44

11:13:27 04-07-2011

*[Signature]*

NOV 4 2 11 PM EST

*Bill davis***THE COUNCIL***A913*

Res. No. 8

**Resolution Calling Upon the State Legislature to Pass Legislation Prohibiting the Sale of Gravity Knives.**

By Mr. Kranis—

Whereas, State Legislation to ban the sale of gravity knives is the crying need in the City of New York; and

Whereas, Such legislation has been discussed by prominent people in public life and they have urged such legislation; and

Whereas, The public prosecutors of The City of New York have all campaigned for such legislation; and

Whereas, The manufacturing of such gravity knives and the sale of them to teenagers, increases crime and juvenile delinquency; and

Whereas, The 1952 Legislature had outlawed the sale of switchblade knives to persons under 16; and

Whereas, Such law had not prohibited the sale of such gravity knives and because of such omission in the 1952 law in not prohibiting the sale of gravity knives, find themselves in abundance in the hands of teenagers with resultant increase in crimes; and

Whereas, Such legislation against the sale of gravity knives would be an important factor in curtailing juvenile delinquency; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the City Council go on record to asking the State Legislature to pass such legislation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Governor of the State of New York urge the State Legislature to pass said legislation; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be sent to His Excellency, the Governor of the State of New York and the Majority and Minority Leaders of both houses.

The City of New York, }  
 Office of the City Clerk, } ss.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a  
 Resolution passed by The Council of The City of New York on  
**FEBRUARY 18, 1958** on file in this office.

*Thomas H. Kranis*  
 .....  
 City Clerk, Clerk of the Council.